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TRENDS

ASSOCIATION
OF AMERICAN
RAILROADS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WASHINGTON, June 18, 1992 -- Despite a threatened national rail strike next week, rail freight traffic rose only modestly last week from year earlier levels, the Association of American Railroads reported today.

"Although shippers haven't begun a lot of stockpiling in anticipation of a strike, a strike at this time would be particularly disruptive to the economy's fragile recovery," said Dr. Harvey A. Levine, vice president of the AAR's economics and finance department. "Railroads have been at the forefront of the economic recovery, with traffic growing faster than the economy as a whole since the beginning of the year."

Dr. Levine pointed out that the automobile industry has only recently reported signs of a recovery -- "and that recovery could be stopped dead in its tracks by a rail strike." Automotive traffic was up 8.9 percent during the week ended June 13, he noted, and is up 16.3 percent over last year for the first 24 weeks of 1992. Railroads provide about two-thirds of the automobile industry's transportation needs, moving parts to assembly lines on a just-in-time basis and moving finished autos from the plant as they come off the assembly line.

Both domestic and international grain movements could also be disrupted by a rail strike. The Chicago Board of Trade noted this, adding that "the entire country would suffer and any economic recovery would be reversed" by a strike. Grain

(more)

volume has recently been showing strong growth, with rail grain shipments up 12.2 percent over last year in the week ended June 13.

During the most recent week, railroads provided an estimated 21.1 billion ton-miles of freight service, up 3.4 percent from the comparable week last year. Intermodal volume totaled 128,436 trailers and containers, up 5.9 percent. Carloadings, which do not include intermodal, totaled 340,422, up 1.5 percent. Carloadings were up 4.1 percent in the West, but down 0.8 percent in the East.

For the first 24 weeks of 1992, ton-miles were estimated at 488.5 billion, up 4.8 percent from the first 24 weeks of 1991. Railroads have moved a total of 2,976,936 trailers and containers, up 8.9 percent from last year. Cumulative carloadings are up 2.5 percent for the year. Out of 19 individual commodity groups, eighteen are up for the year, with coal the only exception.

"While the decline in coal traffic continues to be disappointing, it is reassuring to observe the consistent gains in grain, chemicals, and especially automobile traffic," said Dr. Levine. "Furthermore, the continued gains in intermodal traffic, up 5.9 percent for the week and 8.9 percent for the year, bode well for the industry."

Railroads reporting to the AAR account for 94 percent of the industry's carload traffic and 97 percent of its intermodal volume.

WEEKLY TRAFFIC OF MAJOR RAILROADS
FOR THE WEEK ENDING JUNE 13, 1992

CARLOADS ORIGINATED, BY COMMODITY GROUP

COMMODITY	WEEK ENDING JUNE 13, 1992	COMPARISON WITH SAME WEEK OF 1991	CHANGE	COMPARISON WITH PRECEDING WEEK	CHANGE
Grain	25,132	22,445	12.0 %	22,642	11.0 %
Farm Products, Ex. Grain	2,261	2,021	11.9	2,442	-7.4
Metallic Ores	17,581	18,391	-4.4	18,498	-5.0
Coal	128,116	130,572	-1.9	124,042	3.3
Crushed Stone, Sand & Gravel	15,023	15,680	-4.2	14,783	1.6
Nonmetallic Minerals	9,941	8,603	15.6	9,731	2.2
Grain Mill Products	10,347	9,821	5.4	10,094	2.5
Food & Kindred Products	9,428	8,925	5.6	9,411	0.2
Primary Forest Products	9,061	9,236	-1.9	9,269	-2.2
Lumber & Wood Products	5,832	6,324	-7.8	5,409	7.8
Pulp, Paper & Allied Products	10,736	10,480	2.4	10,577	1.5
Chemicals	29,238	27,439	6.6	28,360	3.1
Petroleum Products	5,850	5,536	5.7	5,696	2.7
Stone, Clay & Glass Products	9,859	10,245	-3.8	9,996	-1.4
Coke	5,538	5,020	10.3	5,542	-0.1
Metals & Products	8,899	10,022	-11.2	9,317	-4.5
Motor Vehicles & Equipment	20,611	18,927	8.9	20,436	0.9
Waste & Scrap Materials	9,231	8,512	8.4	8,876	4.0
All Other Carloads	7,738	7,345	5.4	7,445	3.9
Total	**340,422**	**335,544**	**1.5 %**	**332,566**	**2.4 %**

SUMMARY: CARLOADS ORIGINATED, INTERMODAL TRAFFIC AND ESTIMATED TON-MILES

TRAFFIC	WEEK ENDING JUNE 13, 1992 1992	1991	CHANGE	CUMULATIVE: 24 WEEKS ENDING JUNE 13, 1992 1992	1991	CHANGE
Carloads Originated	**340,422**	**335,544**	**1.5 %**	**7,744,496**	**7,557,086**	**2.5 %**
Intermodal Traffic Originated						
Trailers	64,472	63,111	2.2	1,477,667	1,413,945	4.5
Containers	63,964	58,139	10.0	1,499,269	1,318,589	13.7
Total	**128,436**	**121,250**	**5.9**	**2,976,936**	**2,732,534**	**8.9**
Estimated Ton-Miles						
Class I Railroads (Billions)	**21.1**	**20.4**	**3.4 %**	**488.5**	**466.2**	**4.8 %**

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